

General Letter

York Region

Regional Clerk's Office
Corporate Services Department

October 18, 2007

Ms. Sheila Birrell
Town Clerk
Town of Markham
101 Town Centre Boulevard
Markham, Ontario
L3R 9W3

Dear Ms. Birrell:

Re: Children and Smoke-Free Cars

Regional Council at its meeting of October 18, 2007 adopted without amendment the following resolution urging the Federal Government to enact legislation regarding Children and Smoke-Free Cars:

WHEREAS children exposed to second-hand smoke are at a higher risk for respiratory illnesses including asthma, bronchitis and pneumonia, as well as sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and increased incidences of cancer and heart disease in adulthood;

AND WHEREAS the World Health Organization and Health Canada agree that second-hand smoke is carcinogenic to humans, causing more than 1,000 deaths per year in non-smokers in Canada;

AND WHEREAS the Ontario Medical Association concludes that levels of second-hand smoke can be 23 times more concentrated in a vehicle than in a house because circulation is restricted within a small space;

AND WHEREAS in 2004 approximately half of all Canadian parents smoked in their home, 44 per cent of them also frequently smoked in their vehicle, and only 54 per cent said they never smoked with children under the age of 18 in the vehicle;

AND WHEREAS the Ontario Medical Association is calling for the province to protect Ontarians from second-hand smoke by banning smoking in vehicles carrying children;

AND WHEREAS California and South Australia recently joined several jurisdictions of the United States of America (Arkansas; Louisiana; Bangor, Maine; Keyport, New Jersey and Rockland County, New York) in banning smoking in vehicles carrying children;

AND WHEREAS the Ontario Tobacco Research Unit reports that support for banning smoking in motor vehicles in Ontario increased from 68 per cent in 2002 to 78 per cent in 2005;

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AND WHEREAS one of the 2005 pan-Canadian health goals states that "Canada is a country where: our children reach their full potential, growing up happy, healthy, confident and secure";

AND WHEREAS Canada's Child Health Charter, July 2007, put forward by the College of Family Physicians of Canada with the Canadian Paediatric Society indicates that children need clean air to develop to full potential;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the provincial government amend the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act* to ban smoking in vehicles carrying children, and provide adequate resources for the enforcement of this legislation;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Regional Clerk distribute this resolution to area municipalities for their endorsement, with copies sent to the Premier of Ontario, the provincial Minister of Health Promotion and all York Region MPP's.

If you require any further information, please contact Dr. Karim Kurji, Medical Officer of Health and Director, Public Health Programs at 905-830-4444, Ext. 4012.

Sincerely,



Denis Kelly
Regional Clerk
S. Neill

Copy to: Dr. K. Kurji, Medical Officer of Health and Director, Public Health Programs